Percentage of National Income from Agriculture

279. SHRIMATI MIRA DAS:
SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:
SHRI SARADA MOHANTY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the percentage of national income generated from agriculture and the number of agriculturists in terms of quantum and percentage during the last three years;

(b) whether agriculturists are becoming poor and the gap between rich and poor farmers is increasing; and

(c) the steps being taken to raise the income of poor farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) The share of agriculture including livestock in the Net National Product at factor cost (at current prices) during 1988-89, 1989-90 and 1990-01 was 31.4 per cent 30.7 per cent and 31.6 per cent respectively. The number of cultivators as per Decennial Population Census of 1991 in the country was 110.6 million, which was 38.8 per cent of the total main workers.

(b) No, Sir. The Government has been making concerted efforts to raise the income of agriculturists by improving the productivity in agriculture, as well as providing remunerative prices for their produce. Since the modern technology being used in agriculture is neutral to scale and there is uniform support prices policy for the country as a whole, farmers of all size groups|regions are being benefitted.

(c) In order to raise the income of the small and marginal farmers, the Government has been implementing special programmes of providing subsidised inputs like high yielding variety seeds, fertilizers, cheap credit, assistance for construction of shallow tubewells|dugwells which would help in increasing the farm productivity of these farmers.

Dry Farming

280. SHRI S. K. T. RAMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's farming projects is a gamble on monsoons;

(b) if so, what vigorous steps are being taken by Government to improve dry farming in India; and

(c) whether there is any scope to bring a vast area now dry, into the field of prosperous farming?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Monsoon exercises considerable influence on Indian agriculture. However, projects are being planned and implemented to infuse resilience in the dry farming systems for mitigating the impact of monsoon oberrations.

(b) and (c) The Government is implementing a massive National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA) and a number of integrated Watershed Development Projects funded by world Bank and bilateral donors to improve production and productivity in dry land areas through holistic approach encompassing Agriculture, Animal Husbandary, Forestry, Horticulture, Household production systems, Sericulture, bee-keeping etc. Development of sustainable farming systems has shown tremendous potentials on vast dry land areas of the country located in diverse agro-climatic conditions.